

Abstract

Meaning and Understanding in the Context of Thought of Jacques Derrida and Hans-Georg Gadamer

The focus of the present study is mainly on the discussion of the process of understanding and emergence of meaning. Using the example of Gadamer's hermeneutics it becomes clear what are the limits of positive attempt to express conditions of understanding within the context of the philosophy of finitude. In spite of its undeniable benefits, hermeneutic understanding shows itself to be vulnerable towards ideology and it could be seen as suspected of hidden normativity thanks to its emphasis on agreement and coherency. Derrida's deconstruction on the other hand shows the dynamics of emergence of meaning in language, it emphasizes plurality and ambiguity in contrast towards totalizing unicity and agreement; however, due to this approach, it is unable to offer anything close to what we call the truth. In a parallel line of interpretation, philosophical-antropological approach of Ernst Cassirer standing in comparison with Heidegger's existential analytics of *Dasein* shows that already at the fundamental level in the process of establishment of terms and concepts and earlier our understanding is already determined to a certain extent. Discussion between Gadamer and Derrida shows a necessity of certain arbitrary choice in the process of understanding – with regards to a practical situation of understanding, it is necessary to fixate the meaning on a regular basis notwithstanding the amount of good will to respect the otherness of the other or of a text. Cassirer's position on the other hand shows certain teleology at the basis of all understanding.

Keywords: hermeneutics, deconstruction, meaning, language, understanding, hermeneutic circle, term-creation, sign, difference, dissemination of meaning